

Research Matters

News from the Department of Sustainability and Environment's Spatial Analysis and Research

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Melbourne Atlas

What's better than a day at the footy?

This was the question posed in a recent article in *The Age* announcing the release of the *Melbourne Atlas* – a new publication providing the first comprehensive picture of how Melbourne is changing and the major trends that have shaped Melbourne over the last 50 years.

The *Melbourne Atlas* contributes to a better understanding of issues affecting Melbourne through spatial analysis of demographic, economic, environmental and social change. The first of its kind for Melbourne, it presents a wide range of current and historical data, some going as far back as 1951, from over 170 data sources in over 498 maps, charts and graphs. The Atlas is an important tool for better understanding how this busy, complex and connected city functions – a prerequisite for steering and managing its growth.

So what is better than a day at the footy? According to an ABS survey of Attendance at Cultural Venues and Events, in 2002 visitors to cinemas, Botanic gardens, Zoos or aquariums and libraries each outnumbered those attending football matches.



To win a copy of the *Melbourne Atlas* simply read more about the publication on page 2 of *Research Matters* and email the answer to the following question to spatialanalysis.research@dse.vic.gov.au:

- Since 1945, the population of Melbourne has:
a) doubled, b) trebled, c) remained the same.

Estates attract families

One of our areas of interest at Spatial Analysis and Research is development in growth area estates. A survey conducted by Oliver Hume Research in conjunction with DSE has found that:

- The majority of purchasers in growth areas were owner-occupiers upgrading to a second home.
- Most buyers were families, with the purchaser aged between 25 and 49 years.
- Around two thirds of households had two cars. The majority of purchasers relied on the car as the primary method of travel to employment and travelled greater than 11 km to work.
- Over half of all buyers showed a preference for single storey houses. The preference for double storey houses was greater in the South East than the North West.
- When buying in a growth area estate, buyers considered proximity to childcare and/or education as most important. Other factors such as proximity to shops, friends/relatives, transport, workplace and their current residence were also considered to be important.

For further information on this survey please email christina.inbakaran@dse.vic.gov.au

Customer Survey

Thanks to the 600 people who responded to our customer survey. You have provided us with many ideas to improve our products and services. The consultants are currently completing their final report which we will place on our website.

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Melbourne Atlas

How has Melbourne changed?

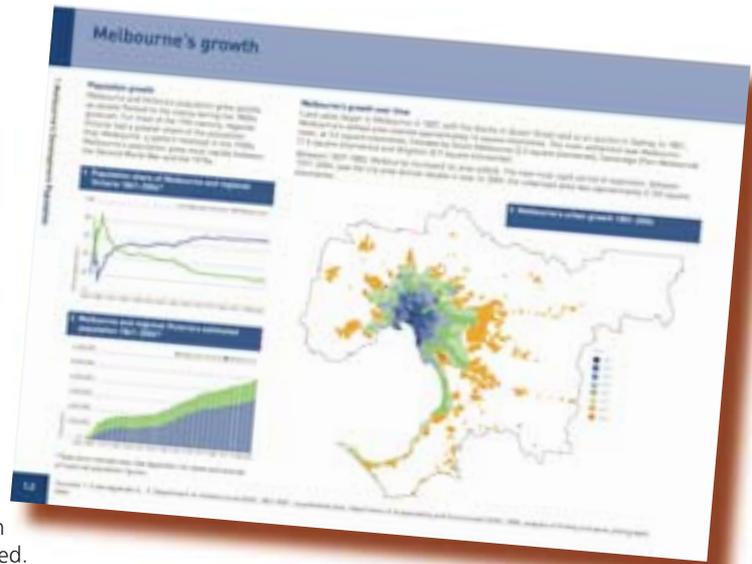
Melbourne's population has increased by 2 million people and trebled in size since 1945 with post-Second World War suburbs making up over two thirds of metropolitan Melbourne.

In contrast to the post World War II baby boom, the city is now adapting to historically low fertility rates and an ageing population. In general, Melbournians are now more culturally diverse, partnering later, better educated, more affluent, more mobile, living longer and staying actively engaged in work and recreation for longer than 50 years ago. Melbourne has seen significant expansion of choice in education and in personal services - from shopping through to entertainment and eating out. Melbourne has experienced a geographical change in the patterns of equality and accessibility, with variations across Melbourne in income, employment and access to services, and areas of need.

Physically, Melbourne is predominately residential in nature and is still mainly a city of owner-occupied separate one and two-storey houses. Changes in housing, retail, commerce, industry and transport have all influenced the pace and scale of post-war development. Melbourne has seen significant changes in employment over the last 30 years - employment growth has been faster than population growth since the mid 1990s, with job losses in manufacturing have been offset by growth in service jobs. Financial, business and property services have concentrated in the inner city, while service and manufacturing jobs have moved outwards.

As industry moves outwards, inner suburbs are being reshaped and wealthy households are now occupying suburbs that previously housed industrial workers and factories. Melbourne's middle ring suburbs are undergoing a different shift with ageing populations and household changes as children move out of the family home and creating their own households, leaving their parents as 'empty nesters'. Outer areas tend to be the domain of families with young children. Overall, the number of people per household has been steadily decreasing leading to a situation where household growth rates are twice that of population growth rates in many parts of Melbourne.

The *Melbourne Atlas* is an important reminder that while overall, the quality of life in Melbourne has changed largely for the better, Melbourne's size, spread and affluence also has a cost. Melbourne has a relatively large ecological footprint, and measures to conserve water, increase energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions are becoming more important as Melbourne continues to grow.



Who is it for?

The *Melbourne Atlas* is a useful tool for people in government, the private sector, research and education who are interested in the factors shaping Melbourne. Its sister publication, *Regional Matters, an Atlas of Regional Victoria*, was launched in April 2006 and has proved a valuable resource for policy makers across a range of government departments and policy areas.

What does it look like?

Information is compiled into 8 chapters: Melbourne's Development, Melbourne's People, Housing, Working, Living, Equity, Learning and Sustaining the Environment. The Atlas comes with a handy Reference Maps booklet to help you interpret the maps, along with a Melbourne Atlas Timeline poster of events that have shaped Melbourne.

For more information on the *Melbourne Atlas*, how to get your copy or to view it online visit www.dse.vic.gov.au/melbourneatlas or call the DSE customer service centre on **131 186**.

The *Melbourne Atlas* includes a timeline poster of Melbourne events that have occurred over the last 100 years. The poster will be available at the Government Expo at the Royal Melbourne Show. Please email SAR at spatialanalysis.research@dse.vic.gov.au if you would like a copy of the timeline.

Local Government Research Network (LGRN)

The *Local Government Research Network* (LGRN), coordinated by Spatial Analysis and Research, continues to endeavour to support links between local government, research and policy. The June 2006 Issue of *Local Connections* welcomed a variety of contributions. Articles covered such issues as the *Annual Community Survey* in Maribyrnong and Moonee Valley's Integrated Transport Plan. See www.dse.vic.gov.au/lgrn for the present and past editions.

The LGRN web page has provided a useful forum for sharing Council projects and housing strategies for some time. The list of sustainability and transport projects and strategies has been updated. Councils are encouraged to continue emailing details of housing strategies, council projects, sustainability strategies and transport strategies to christina.inbakaran@dse.vic.gov.au. For further information please contact Christina Inbakaran on **9637 9570** or Christine Kilmartin on **9637 9629**.

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Mallee Muster

Demographic Consultations extend to North-western Victoria

To gain local knowledge as part of the process of updating the Victorian in Future (VIF) population projections, staff from Spatial Analysis and Research are visiting Victorian councils. In the last week of July, Senior Demographer, John O'Leary visited the North West of the State. In addition to the DSE regional offices in Bendigo and Mildura, John visited the Shires of Buloke, Campaspe, Gannawarra and Loddon, and the Rural Cities of Mildura and Swan Hill. Following are a few of the important issues being raised in this part of the State.

The spatial implications of water trading rights

Water trading is the buying and selling of water entitlements or allocations. It could be expected that there will be implications for the size of future local populations as water rights are traded from "low value" uses in parts of the Shires of Gannawarra and Loddon to "higher value" uses in areas close to the Murray River in the Swan Hill and Mildura municipalities. The development of olive and almond plantations, especially between Boundary Bend and Robinvale in the Rural City of Swan Hill, and the all year around labour required to maintain these plantations illustrates the spatial changes that may be brought about by water trading rights.

Mobile populations

The difficulty in counting a fluctuating and at times mobile population, and the implications of this on grant allocations, infrastructure planning and service planning was another issue affecting North Western Victoria. The official Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimates of population, the Estimated Resident Population (ERP), are based on the concept of "usual residence" where each person has a basic attachment to a particular dwelling, where they reside on a permanent basis.

Determining a person's usual residence is becoming less straightforward as people often have more than one usual residence. This view was reinforced by the personal circumstances of the council staff that John met in his regional visits. Many staff live in one location during the week, but have another location where they live at the weekend. The emergence of multiple residences begs the question of whether ERP is always the best measure for planning and grant allocation purposes. Others who may fall into this category

include weekenders (people who work in Melbourne during the week, but who have another dwelling in Regional Victoria, where they live at the weekend), and children, whose parents are divorced or separated, who live on a regular basis in the home of both parents.

Fluctuating seasonal populations

Another dimension to changing populations is the issues of seasonal workers. Many towns on the Murray have large seasonal work forces, a large itinerant population, large holiday populations and in some case large weekend populations. Councils with such populations, maintain that services and funds are not being provided to cope with the actual, as distinct from the officially measured, population in these places. Hodi Beauliv from Robinvale Resource Centre gave John a tour of Robinvale, where people were living in caravans in back yards on residential blocks; in vineyards some workers lived in "pickers' huts". With many of these residents not part of the official town population, obtaining funding to provide adequate housing and services is difficult.

Despite the importance of these issues both overseas, as well as in Victoria, we are not unaware of any work being undertaken overseas on these issues in Australia. The ABS has in the past undertaken some work on measuring peak populations in Australia. An estimated measure of peak populations in Victorian towns was included in the recently released Regional Atlas (*Regional Matters: An Atlas of Regional Victoria*).

Your experiences

Have you found that traditional population measures are not always the best measure for making decisions about planning and service delivery? We would like to hear from you. While ERP will always remain the official measure of population in Australia, we would be interested in hearing of practical examples where funding and/or planning decisions could have benefited from alternative measures of population and proposals for how such alternative populations could be measured. Please direct comments to John O'Leary (email john.o'leary@dse.vic.gov.au or phone **03 9637 9553**). A summary of feedback on this topic will be published in a future edition of *Research Matters*.



New housing in Koondrook

What is the population of my area?

While most users of annual population estimates understand that the official Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures are produced using a model and a range of annually collected indicator data, some are not as aware of the annual revisions that occur to these figures. Contrary to common belief, the total, official population of any given area, at any given time, is not set in stone.

There are two key aspects to population data that all users should recognise:

- Revised population estimates are published annually
- Revised population estimates are published after each Census (every 5 years)

Annual revised estimates

Every year, when the ABS publishes their annual population estimates for the most recent year, they also revise their population estimates (Estimated Resident Population, or ERPs). These revisions can be quite significant and change the annual growth quite dramatically. The following table shows annual revisions for the Victorian total ERP over the last few years.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Preliminary ERP	4,828,968	4,872,538	4,917,394	4,972,779	5,022,346
Preliminary growth rate (%)	1.7	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.2
Revised ERP	4,822,663	4,857,228	4,911,425	4,962,970	nya
Revised growth rate (%)	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.0	nya

Source ABS published ERPs

Census revised estimates

Official ERPs are also revised again, once the next Census has been taken. The following table demonstrates the difference in growth between 1996 and 2001 for a range of geographical areas in Victoria. It compares the growth rate using the preliminary (pre-Census) and revised (post-Census) figures. This clearly shows the potential for variation, from quite small (2.4% for Victoria) to quite large (89% for regional Victoria).

	1996 ERP (Final)	2001 ERP (Prelim)	Growth 1996-2001 (Prelim)	2001 ERP (Revised)	1996-2001 growth (Revised)	Absolute difference between revised and preliminary growth	% difference between revised and preliminary growth
Victoria	4,560,155	4,828,968	268,813	4,822,663	262,508	-6,305	↓ 2.4%
Melbourne	3,283,278	3,521,957	238,679	3,488,750	205,472	-33,207	↓ 14%
Regional Victoria	1,276,877	1,307,011	30,134	1,333,913	57,036	+26,902	↑ 89%
Brimbank	155,584	166,802	11,218	169,839	14,255	+3,037	↑ 27%
Melbourne	42,110	57,248	17,532	52,117	14,401	-5,131	↓ 29%
Bass Coast	21,543	23,880	2,337	25,683	4,140	+1,803	↑ 77%
Moyne	16,288	15,886	-402	15,745	-543	-141	↓ 46%

Source ABS published ERPs

So what numbers do I use?

We strongly recommend that when using population data you continue to use the latest published ABS figures. However we urge you to remember that these estimates are just that, estimates, and are subject to change and revision. More important than focussing on the exact numbers is to consider broader issues such as medium to long term rates of growth or decline and the underlying reasons for that population change.

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Urban and Regional Research online

The Spatial Analysis and Research web page can be accessed at www.dse.vic.gov.au/research/urbanandregional

Available now:

- The *Melbourne Atlas 2006*
- The latest editions of *Research Matters*, the *Residential Land Bulletin & Local Connections*
- *Regional Matters* – www.dse.vic.gov.au/regionalmatters
- Southwest Sustainable Settlements – Forum 4 Camperdown, July 2006

Did you know?

In 2005 the Urban and Regional Research website received 156,241 views. However in the six months to June we have already received 123,809 views.

Please email any comments or suggestions to regarding the website to christina.inbakaran@dse.vic.gov.au.